



Board of Library Trustees
January 10, 2024 at 7:30 PM

The regular meeting of the Board of Trustees was called to order at 7:34pm by Chair Carol Hoffman. Present were: Trustees Carol B. Hoffman (Chair), Peter T. Bowman (clerk), Cathryn M. Mercier, Nancy F. Kukura, Mark S. Robinson (Treasurer), Director Linda C.W. Gardener, and Assistant Director Diane Wall. Absent was Trustee Paul J. Fahey (Vice Chair).

City warrants and trustee invoices were approved for payment. The minutes from the November 14, 2023 meeting were approved. A budget memo from City of Melrose CFO Patrick Dello Russo was received into correspondence.

Director's Report:

Budget –

The Trustees were given a mid-year budget overview. Based on increased usage, the Friends have added Hoopla (downloadable books & audio) to their areas of support. The expense budget for FY2025 is expected to be fairly straightforward, with the big changes taking place mid-year for staffing increases as we move into the new building. The proposed budget will be sent to the Trustees prior to submittal to the City.

Trustee Business –

Trust fund spending to date is \$36,766.11. Remaining budgeted funds for FY24 will be moved from UBS into the Cambridge Savings Bank this month. David Carlson reports that the fund is doing well.

Beebe Building –

Linda is currently working with DPW to try to get some lighting replaced. DPW is currently very short staffed; the full time library custodian has not been replaced due to ongoing issues within the department.

Policies/Administration –

The inauguration for the new Mayor has taken place, along with a brief meeting for all department heads. Linda will be meeting with the Mayor individually, and plans



to have an extensive conversation regarding the staffing needs of the library for the new building. Some needs are new, specific to the building, and some have been outstanding for years in order for the library to better support demand for services.

Programs –

Diane reported on the ongoing activities provided for patrons of all ages. Of note is a new virtual-only book group for adults. It is hoped that the virtual-only format, rather than hybrid, will provide a more fulfilling experience for those who attend remotely. The library is participating in the year-long Massachusetts Center for the Book 2024 Reading Challenge. There will be prizes, author events and a party at the end of the year for those who complete the challenge.

Staffing & Staff Development –

The library's Teen Services Librarian, Muhl Heller-Wallace, has taken a new position and left MPL. Diane, Linda and key staff revised the job description in light of the new space. It will be posted for 10 days. A new part time Reference Librarian has come on board to fill hours left vacant by another part time staff member who has achieved a full time position in another library.

Friends –

The Friends sent thank you letters and emails to existing donors this Fall, offering the opportunity to give again. This had a good response, with several donors using their company's matching programs as well.

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Trustee Bylaws – Discussion of the Trustee bylaws was tabled until both Cathie and Paul are present.

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Renovation Report

Steel is expected to begin arriving the week of the 20th for the addition. A myriad of issues continue to be discussed with the contractors, but work is moving forward. We are currently expecting that work will be complete around September.

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Naming Policy –

Linda presented a rough draft of a Financial Donation Naming Policy specific to the building project. The Trustees discussed and made suggestions, and the policy will be revised for continued discussion/adoption.

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Public Art Grant –

Kris Rodolico from Follow Your Art met with Linda regarding the potential grant. It is unknown if any potential installation would be considered permanent. Linda reached out to other library directors and will review to see if any have helpful information specific to this type of situation.

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Other business – The Trustees discussed their desire to once again present the library staff with a Valentine's Day appreciation brunch. Nancy will lead the effort, with assistance from other board members.

A discussion was held regarding the scheduled Board meetings. Due to the high number of meetings that need to be regularly rescheduled to the second Tuesday of the month, it was decided to make the change for regular meetings to be on the second Tuesday of the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43pm, as moved by Nancy and seconded by Mark.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12, 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter T. Bowman, Clerk
Approved May 14, 2024